

Remarks

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject patent application are respectfully requested.

Although the Office Action Summary indicates that a PTO-1449 form is attached thereto, Applicants did not receive any such form. In addition, the Information Disclosure Statement filed on March 21, 2001 expressly notes that "[t]he cited documents are referenced in the application specification at page 2." As such, contrary to the assertion in the office action, the required concise explanation of relevance was in fact provided by Applicants at the time the Information Disclosure Statement was filed. Consequently, Applicants respectfully request that the documents identified in the March 21, 2001 Information Disclosure Statement be considered and an initialed PTO-1449 form be returned to the undersigned with the next office action to evidence this consideration.

Claims 2, 5, 10, 13 and 15 have been amended to address the informalities noted in the office action and withdrawal of the objection to these claims is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as allegedly being "obvious" over Takata (U.S. Patent No. 6,594,777). While not acquiescing in this rejection, claims 1-18 have been amended and the discussion below makes reference to the amended claims.

The Takata patent discloses an arrangement for enabling the repair or update of an "unrewritable" memory device used in game machines, mobile terminals, etc. The arrangement includes a mask ROM 1 and a flash memory device 2. The mask ROM has defective memory cells in a region 11A. The flash memory includes an address data storing region 21F for storing address data corresponding to the addresses for the region 11A and a modifying data storing region 21B for storing the correct data for the defective memory cells of region 11A. If an input address matches address data in region 21F (which is supplied to a register 21D for comparison with the input address), output from mask ROM 1 is inhibited and data from the region 21B is output instead. If the input address does not match the address data in region 21F, output from mask ROM is enabled.

The Takata patent is not concerned with the possibility of unauthorized copying of data from mask ROM 1. Rather, Takata is concerned with the replacement of defective memory cells in mask ROM 1. The office action nonetheless equates the claimed "dummy" data with the

"defective" data of the Takata patent because both allegedly have "no useful information." Applicants do not agree with the assertions in the office action. For example, the purported "dummy data" of Takata is the result of defective memory cells. The dummy data in an illustrative, non-limiting example embodiment described in the subject patent application is written to functional memory cells in a predetermined address range to replace a necessary part of regular data, of an application program, of a game program, etc. and is thus quite different than anything disclosed in Takata.

In any event, the independent claims have been amended to describe that the dummy data storing area fixedly stores dummy data in place of a second portion of regular data (or a second portion of an application program or a second portion of a game program), the second portion being necessary for the use of the regular data (or of the application program or of the game program). An illustrative, non-limiting example of this is described at page 13, line 22 of the subject patent application in the context of data that is "indispensable for executing the game ...". No such feature is shown or suggested in the Takata patent. Indeed, because the Takata patent is concerned with repairing defective cells, the nature of the data stored in those cells (*e.g.*, whether or not it is necessary) is not discussed.

The dependent claims are believed to be allowable for the reasons advanced with respect to the claims from which they depend and for containing other patentable features. By way of example, claims 4 and 12 describe that different writing voltages are used for different portions of the semiconductor nonvolatile memory. This feature is not shown or suggested in the Tanaka patent. The portions of the Tanaka patent referenced in the office action (*i.e.*, col. 5, lines 1-13 and col. 7, lines 47-51) do not describe different writing voltages as claimed. Col. 5, lines 1-13 is part of an explanation regarding the operation timings of Figure 4. Applicants find no relationship between this portion of the Tanaka patent and the claimed writing voltages. Col. 7, lines 47-51 describe disabling a protection circuit when a voltage higher than Vcc is provided as an input signal. Here again, this is unrelated to using different writing voltages for different portions of the nonvolatile memory.

New claims 19-32 have been added. The subject matter of these new claims is fully supported by the original disclosure and no new matter is added. Claims 19 and 28 each describes the storing of a first part of a video game program and dummy data in a video game

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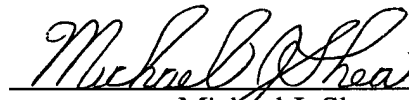
program memory of a storage device and the storing of a second part of the video game program in a memory of the storage device separate from the video game program memory. The dummy data is stored at predetermined locations of the video game program memory. The second part of the video game program is predetermined to be a part necessary for use of the video game program so that copying of the first part of the video game program and the dummy data from the video game program memory will not provide an operable video game program. Takata does not teach or suggest, for example, the storing of a second part of a video game program, predetermined to be a part necessary for use of the video game program, in a memory separate from a memory in which a first part of the video game program is stored. Thus, claims 19 and 28 (and those claims that depend therefrom) are believed to be allowable.

For at least the reasons set forth above, the pending claims are believed to be allowable and favorable office action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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